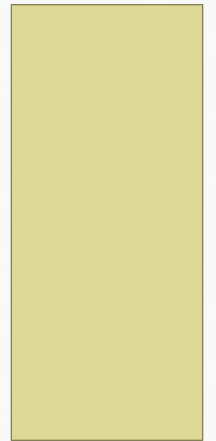# BUILDING STRONG TEXT SETS

LOUISIANA TEACHER LEADERS

MEETING GOALS

- Today, we will learn how to construct complex texts sets which act as a vehicle for accomplishing the CCSS.
- Inherent in this discussion will be a focus on finding related texts that enrich, engage, and empower student learning.

AGENDA:

1. **Text sets:** definition and purpose, strong vs. weak
2. **Sample text sets:** enduring understandings, sample research, and related CCSS.
3. **Build a text set:** use the resource list and work cooperatively on building a strong text set.

3 SHIFTS:

- **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction**

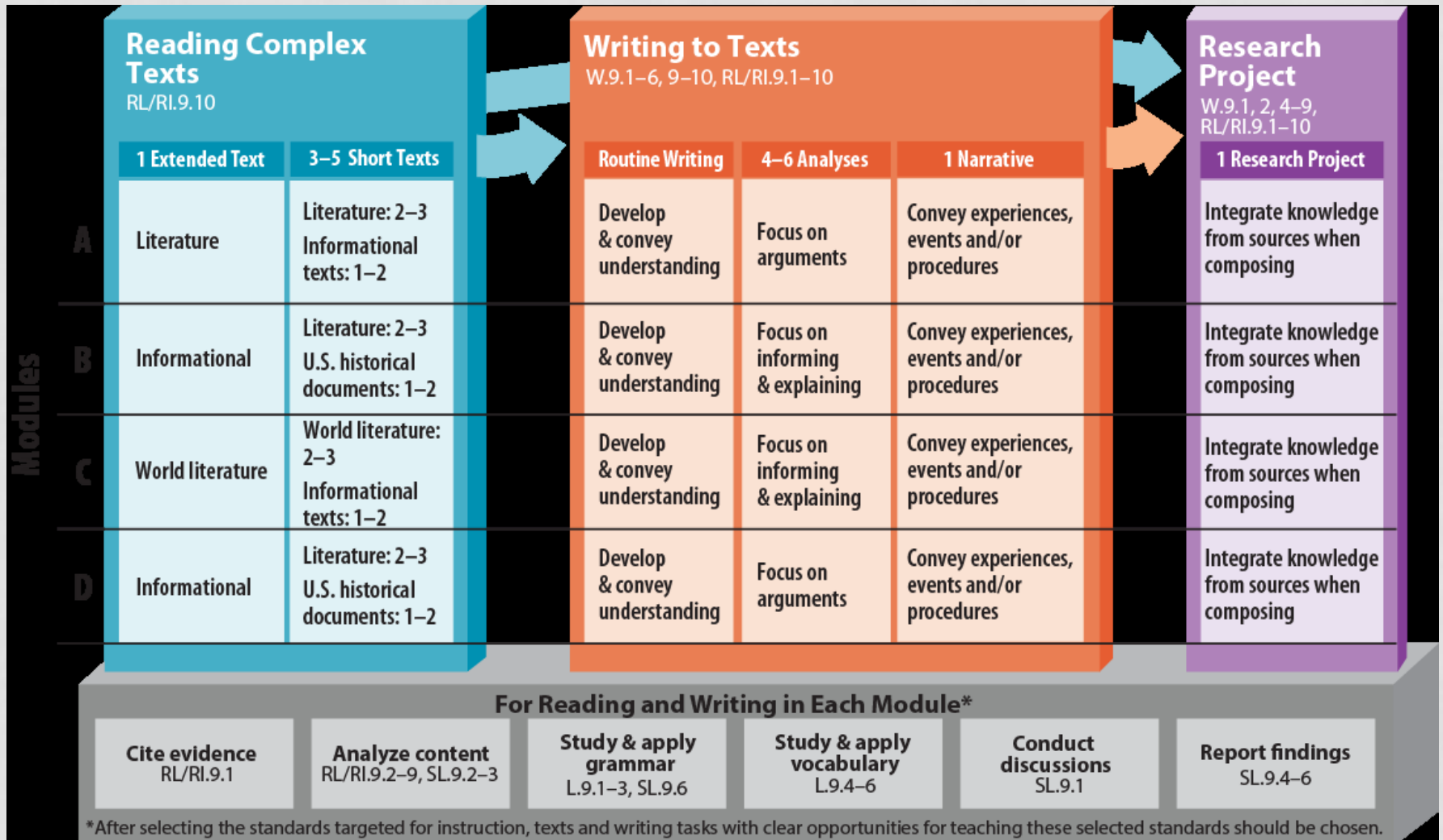| Grade	Literary	Information
4	50%	50%
8	45%	55%
12	30%	70%

- Reading, writing and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational
    - *Reduce Scaffolding

- Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**
    - *Appendix B; LDE Yearlong Scope and Sequence

INTRODUCTION: WHY TEXT SETS?

- The *Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects* (CCSS for ELA/Literacy) focus on building student ability to read and understand grade-level complex texts and express that understanding clearly through writing and speaking.

- Teachers must ensure students are independently and proficiently meeting the expectations of the CCSS for ELA/Literacy in the context of reading complex texts, and organizing a curriculum around a series of text sets can provide a rich context.
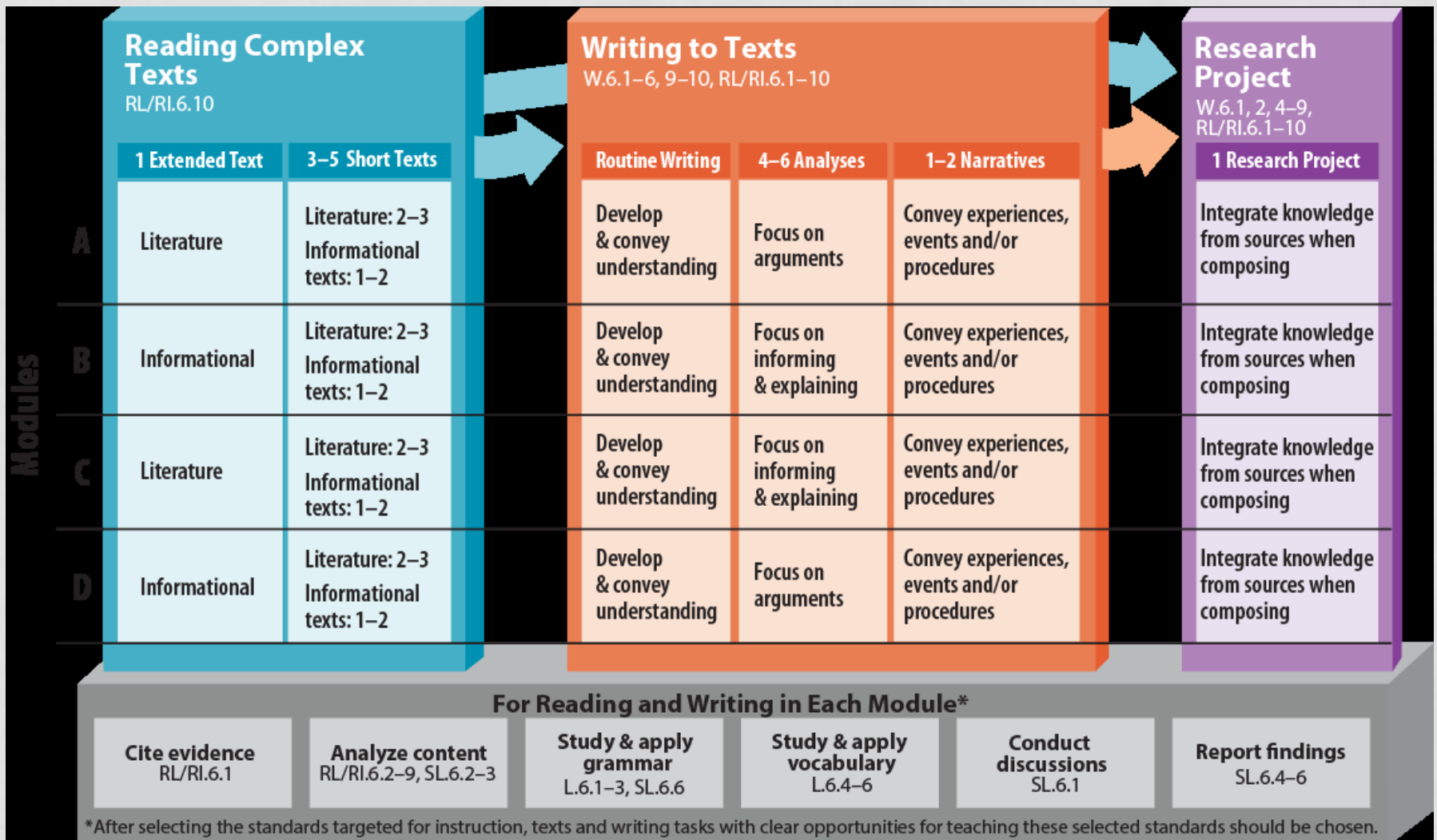
WHY TEXT SETS?
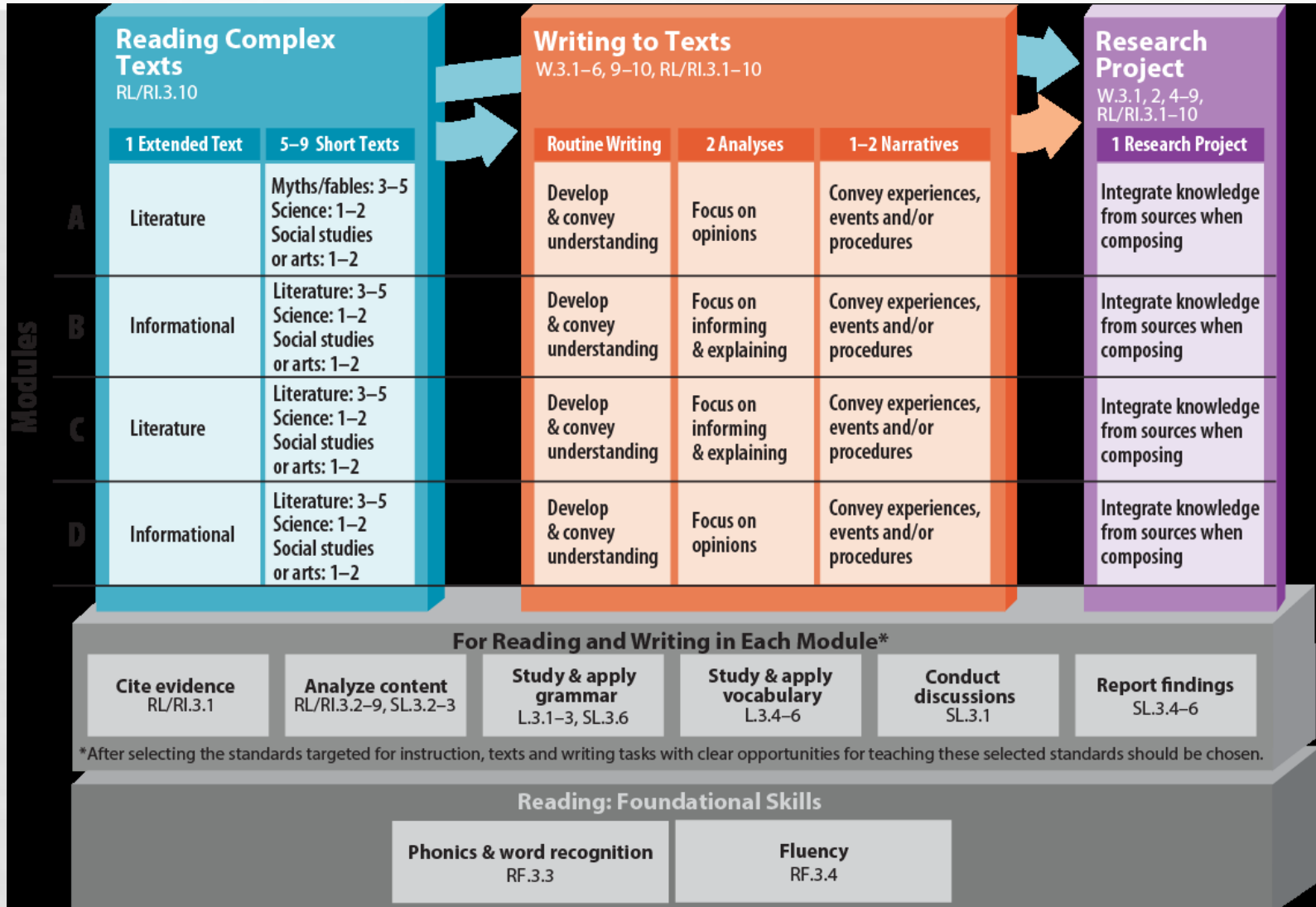# PARCC CONTENT MODEL FRAMEWORK

WHY TEXT SETS?
PARCC CONTENT MODEL FRAMEWORK

Reading Complex Texts
RL/RI.6.10

Writing to Texts
W.6.1–6, 9–10, RL/RI.6.1–10

Research Project
W.6.1, 2, 4–9, RL/RI.6.1–10

Modules	1 Extended Text	3–5 Short Texts	Routine Writing	4–6 Analyses	1–2 Narratives	1 Research Project
A	Literature	Literature: 2–3 Informational texts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on arguments	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing
B	Informational	Literature: 2–3 Informational texts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on informing & explaining	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing
C	Literature	Literature: 2–3 Informational texts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on informing & explaining	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing
D	Informational	Literature: 2–3 Informational texts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on arguments	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing

For Reading and Writing in Each Module*

Cite evidence RL/RI.6.1	Analyze content RL/RI.6.2–9, SL.6.2–3	Study & apply grammar L.6.1–3, SL.6.6	Study & apply vocabulary L.6.4–6	Conduct discussions SL.6.1	Report findings SL.6.4–6

*After selecting the standards targeted for instruction, texts and writing tasks with clear opportunities for teaching these selected standards should be chosen.

WHY TEXT SETS?
PARCC CONTENT MODEL FRAMEWORK

Modules	Reading Complex Texts RL/RI.3.10		Writing to Texts W.3.1–6, 9–10, RL/RI.3.1–10			Research Project W.3.1, 2, 4–9, RL/RI.3.1–10
	1 Extended Text	5–9 Short Texts	Routine Writing	2 Analyses	1–2 Narratives	1 Research Project
A	Literature	Myths/fables: 3–5 Science: 1–2 Social studies or arts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on opinions	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing
B	Informational	Literature: 3–5 Science: 1–2 Social studies or arts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on informing & explaining	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing
C	Literature	Literature: 3–5 Science: 1–2 Social studies or arts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on informing & explaining	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing
D	Informational	Literature: 3–5 Science: 1–2 Social studies or arts: 1–2	Develop & convey understanding	Focus on opinions	Convey experiences, events and/or procedures	Integrate knowledge from sources when composing

For Reading and Writing in Each Module*

Cite evidence RL/RI.3.1	Analyze content RL/RI.3.2–9, SL.3.2–3	Study & apply grammar L.3.1–3, SL.3.6	Study & apply vocabulary L.3.4–6	Conduct discussions SL.3.1	Report findings SL.3.4–6

*After selecting the standards targeted for instruction, texts and writing tasks with clear opportunities for teaching these selected standards should be chosen.

Reading: Foundational Skills

Phonics & word recognition RF.3.3	Fluency RF.3.4

WHAT IS A TEXT SET?

- A text set is a collection of texts (e.g., novels, passages, articles, film, art, websites, etc.) organized around an **anchor text**.

- Each set has a **purpose** based on the way the texts are related.

- When texts are organized to **"talk to one another,"** students are able to **build knowledge** about the way complex texts represent certain topics, comment on life, and provide insight into different cultures, perspectives, or time periods.

SAMPLE: STRONG VS. WEAK

Strong Text Set	Weak Text Set
Anchor Text: *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury	**Anchor Text:** *Fahrenheit 451*, Ray Bradbury
Related Texts: • "Burning a Book," William Stafford (Poem) • "The Book Burnings," United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Informational) • "You Have Insulted Me: A Letter," Kurt Vonnegut (Informational) • Excerpts from *The Book Thief*, Marcus Zusak (Appendix B Exemplar) • "Learning to Read and Write," Frederick Douglass (Informational) • "The Joy of Reading and Writing: Superman and Me," Sherman Alexie (Informational)	**Related Texts:** • "'Chaos:' Gunman Ambushes, Kills Two Firefighters at New York Blaze," Catherine Shoichet and Greg Botelho (CNN) (Informational) • "Johannes Gutenberg and the Printing Press," Mary Bellis (About.com) (Informational) • *Fahrenheit 451*, Francois Truffaut (Film) • "About Ray Bradbury: Biography" (Informational) • "The Pedestrian," Ray Bradbury (Literary) • *The Children's Story*, James Clavell (Literary)
What makes this a strong set?	**What makes this a weak set?**
• Connections build knowledge about censorship • Thematic connections encourage students to think about the social and political effects of literacy • Encourages purposeful rereading and deep analysis	• Connections are sometimes superficial or tangential • Unclear how a teacher would use texts to support student understanding about a topic or themes • Encourages reading the text once and moving on

SAMPLE: ENGLISH II

Unit Two	Anchor Text	Related Texts	Unit Focus	Possible Common Core State Standards[4]
	The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks, Rebecca Skloot (Informational)	**Literary Texts** • "Everyday Use," Alice Walker • "Women," Alice Walker (Appendix B Exemplar, Poem) • "To Be of Use," Marge Piercy (Poem) **Informational Texts** • "Immortal Cells, Enduring Issues," *Johns Hopkins Magazine*, Dale Keiger • "Immortal Cells, Moral Issues," *The Baltimore Sun*, Ruth R. Faden	Building on the idea of cultural preservation, students will consider the importance of leaving a legacy and consider the myriad ways that we can leave a legacy, through our language, our families, or even our cells. Students will also explore the issue of ownership: specifically its definition and its debatable nature. This set pairs well with Biology I and Civics, allowing students to contextualize and extend content learned in other courses.	**Possible Reading Standards** RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.4, RL.9-10.10 RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, RI.9-10.4, RI.9-10.5, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.7, RI.9-10.8, RI.9-10.9, RI.9-10.10
	Text Complexity Rationale The readability of these texts is appropriate for grade 10, and the content of the texts is complex and provides opportunities for rich instruction of analytical reading skills.	• "Paying Patients for their Tissue: The Legacy of Henrietta Lacks," *SCIENCE*, Robert D. Truog, Aaron S. Kesselheim, Steven Joffe • The Bill of Rights: Amendments 1-10 of the *Constitution*, The United States *Nonprint Texts (Media, Website, Video, Film, Music, Art, Graphics)* • "Henrietta Everlasting: 1950s Cells Still Alive, Helping Science," Erin Biba (Graphic Timeline) • *The Sunflower Quilting Bee at Arles*, Faith Ringgold (Art)	**Sample Research** Consider the following position from David Korn, vice provost for research at Harvard University: "I think people are morally obligated to allow their bits and pieces to be used to advance knowledge to help others. Since everybody benefits, everybody can accept the small risks of having their tissue scraps used in research." Then, write an essay in which you evaluate the benefits and consequences of giving people legal ownership of their tissues. Use evidence from the texts studied in the unit and from your own independent research to support your position. *(This prompt is adapted from the Random House Teacher's Guide.)*	**Possible Writing Standards** W.9-10.1a-e, W.9-10.2a-f, W.9-10.3a-e, W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.9a-b, W.9-10.10
				Possible Speaking and Listening Standards SL.9-10.1a-d, SL.9-10.2, SL.9-10.4, SL.9-10.5, SL.9-10.6
				Possible Language Standards L.9-10.1a-b, L.9-10.2a-c, L.9-10.3, L.9-10.4a-d, L.9-10.5a-b, L.9-10.6
	Possible Teacher Resources Random House Teacher's Guide: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* "A Structure for Deoxyribose Nucleic Acid," James Watson and Francis Crick			

CREATING A TEXT SET:

Step One: Determine the knowledge and understanding to be gained through text and select anchor texts

Consider the knowledge and skills students should have at the end of the grade or course. Use the answers to the following questions and the above text selection criteria to guide the selection of anchor texts.

• What skills do literate college and career ready students possess?

• What are the end-of-year student performance expectations?

• What aspects of complex texts (e.g., "Texts provide insight into different cultures" or "Authors use words to manipulate the reader") should students understand at the end of the year?

• How might a student's experience during the school day be more integrated across the disciplines? What knowledge in history, science, and the arts can be gained, reinforced, extended, challenged, or fictionalized through texts? What knowledge in history, science, or the arts can help students build knowledge that would be useful for understanding texts in English language arts?

CREATING A TEXT SET:

Step Two: Determine a purpose for the set, select related texts, and organize the sets

A text set can serve multiple purposes based on the way the texts connect: topically (including content from other disciplines), conceptually or thematically, by style (author, genre, or treatment), or by providing needed background information for the anchor text or offering a different perspective from the anchor text.

Most sets should incorporate a variety and balance of text formats, lengths, and types.

Consider the following questions for this step:

• Do the texts in the set relate in a clear and purposeful way?

• Do the sets build knowledge within and across grades?

• Do the sets support text complexity requirements of the CCSS and increase over time?

• Have considerations been made for variety and balance of text formats, lengths, and types?

CREATING A TEXT SET:

Step Three: Identify the appropriate standards for each strand and possible student inquiry tasks

The PARCC Model Content Frameworks chart illustrates how reading, writing, and research are integrated around complex texts. There is no checklist of standards to be taught—teachers will likely teach every grade-specific standard multiple times throughout the year in the context of different text sets. What changes from text set to text set is the focus and emphasis on the types of texts read and written about; what remains constant is the cultivation of students' literacy skills in preparation for college and career readiness.

Consider the following questions for this step:

• What features of the texts in the set allow for quality instruction across the strands of the CCSS?

• What standards are met through the text set?

• What areas for student investigation will deepen students' understanding of the texts and concepts of the set?

CREATING A TEXT SET:

Step Four: Refine the text set

Evaluate your sets for the following criteria and make necessary revisions so they are strong and provide opportunities for students to meet the expectations of the CCSS for ELA/Literacy:

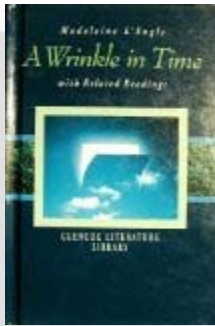| Strong text sets	Weak text sets
Build students' knowledge and include texts with focused and purposeful connections	Contain texts that are not related across sets or are superficially connected
Increase in text complexity within and across sets to support student achievement of grade-level complexity demands of CCSS [2]	Have erratic text complexity levels that do not support the staircase of text complexity in the CCSS [3]
Contain accurate and authentic texts worthy of study	Contain inaccurate texts or only commissioned texts from textbooks
Meet several CCSS from multiple strands	Only align to a single strand or a few standards

RESOURCES

Resources for Locating Texts

Texts and resources for locating texts for classroom use are available through a variety of electronic sites.

- Lit2Go: A free online collection of classic texts, including PDF and audio versions.
- American Literature: Another free online collection of texts
- TumbleBook Library and TumbleBookCloud Junior: Free online collections of contemporary texts with audio
- The Learning Network (*The New York Times*): A blog that highlights useful articles and content for classrooms
- National Geographic Explorer: A subscription-based classroom magazine with free public online access
- Article of the Week (Kelly Gallagher) and an explanation for how this is done (grades 6-12)
- The Reading & Writing Project (Columbia University): Resources for building classroom libraries and text sets
- Additional search engines for similar books based on topic and/or readability level: Scholastic Book Wizard, ReadKiddoRead, Book Pig, Carol Hurst's Children's Literature Site, and GoodReads
- Public libraries and school libraries often publish similar book lists or "If you like x, then try reading y" lists

STILL NEED HELP?
TRY TEXTBOOK EDITIONS OF NOVELS THAT HAVE "RELATED READINGS" OR "LITERATURE CONNECTIONS" FOR IDEAS!!

A Wrinkle in Time, Madeleine L'Engle

This science fiction novel deals with universal themes such as good versus evil and the pain of not fitting in socially. *A Wrinkle in Time* follows the adventures of a teenage girl, Meg Murry, as she travels through space and time with her brother and a school friend. These travels bring them to the heart of evil where Meg's brother is blinded and held captive. Eventually, however, Meg rescues her father, who has been waging war against the evil forces, and wins back her brother with a force greater than evil—love.

Related Readings

"A Loint of Paw"—short story by Isaac Asimov

"Jabberwocky"—poem by Lewis Carroll

"The Jumblies"—poem by Edward Lear

from *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*—excerpt from the novel by C. S. Lewis

"Gettysburg Address"—speech by Abraham Lincoln

"Einstein Revealed: Time Traveler"—informative Web site by NOVA Online

- A Short "History" of the French Revolution
  - *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*, document
  - *Declaration of the Rights of Women*, document by Olympe de Gouges
  - *A Last Letter from Prison*, letter by Olympe de Gouges
  - *In Defense of the Terror*, speech by Maximilien Robespierre
- from *Hind Swarj or Indian Rule*, nonfiction by Mohandas K. Gandhi
- from *Guillotine: Its Legend and Lore*, nonfiction by Daniel Gerould
- *Five Men*, poem by Zbigniew Herbert
- *The Pit and the Pendulum*, short story by Edgar Allan Poe
- from *Darkness at Noon*, play by Sidney Kingsley
- *The Strike*, essay by Tillie Olsen
- "The Man with the Hoe," poem by Edwin Markham
- *L'homme a la houe*, painting by Jean-Francois Milliet

CHOOSING ANCHOR TEXTS/ RELATED TEXTS:

- Text complexity (within bandwidth…lower end for lower grade, higher end for higher grade) Non-negotiable: Appendix A; LDE Year-Long Plans

- Text complexity should increase throughout the year. (Staircase)

- When choosing informational text, consider other subjects of students.

- Even if "old texts" fit in the grade band, remember CCSS will mean a shift in focus… DECREASE SCAFFOLDING!

- Know your standards before choose related texts:
  - RL 7 Example

BUILD A TEXT SET

- Choose a table **partner** to work with in building a strong text set.

- Choose a **grade level** and the placement of the text in the year (beginning/middle/end).

- Choose an **anchor** text from Appendix B or one that immediately fits the text complexity for your chosen grade level.

- Use the **steps (1-4)** and the resources given to build a strong text set with **related texts**, **unit focus**, sample **research** ideas, and possible **CCSS** focuses.

WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

- What were some challenges in the process?
- What were some successes in the process?
- Parking Lot questions/take-aways.